United Nations ST/IC/2002/30

Secretariat

10 May 2002

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2002 competitive examinations for English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take one or more of the following competitive examinations in 2002, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998:

(a) Competitive examination for English-language verbatim reporters;

(b) Competitive examination for English-language editors;

(c) Competitive examination for English-language translators/précis-writers.

2. The competitive examinations for English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers will be held on **19, 20 and 21 August 2002**, respectively, in New York, Geneva, Vienna, London and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of these examinations is to establish rosters from which present and future vacancies for English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers will be filled.

3. The examinations are open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members of subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of these examinations. Such candidates, if successful in one or more of the examinations, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who are successful and are selected for inclusion in one or more of the rosters will be assigned to fill vacancies for English-language posts as they occur in the language

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services in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and Bangkok. Assignments are subject to rotation and successful candidates may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations in Africa, Asia or Europe or at Headquarters according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 12 to 16 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination must:

(a) Have English as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of English and an excellent knowledge of French and one of the other official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish). The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application either a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status at which English is the language of instruction or hold a university degree from a recognized school of translation.

Candidates for the verbatim reporting examination are expected to have excellent word-processing skills.

5. The requirement of a degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status mentioned in paragraph 4 (c) may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is English, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final.**

7. **The written verbatim reporting examination, to be held on 19 August 2002,** will consist of three papers:

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

(a) Editing of and making all necessary logical and stylistic corrections to an English text (two hours, morning of 19 August 2002). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Bringing the English version of a text into line with the original French (one hour and a half, morning of 19 August 2002);

(c) Bringing the English version of a text into line with the original Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish text selected by the candidate (one hour and a half, afternoon of 19 August 2002).

8. **The written editing examination, to be held on 20 August 2002**, will consist of four papers:

(a) Editing of four short texts in English (two hours, morning of 20 August 2002). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Editing of a text in English to bring it into line with a text edited in French (one hour and a half, morning of 20 August 2002);

(c) Summary in English of an Arabic, Chinese, Russian or Spanish text chosen by the candidate (one hour and a half, afternoon of 20 August 2002);

(d) Completion of an exercise in English style and usage (45 minutes, afternoon of 20 August 2002).

9. **The written translation and précis-writing examination, to be held on 21 August 2002**, will consist of four papers:

(a) Translation into English of a general text in Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish (two hours, morning of 21 August 2002). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Translation into English of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, one in each of the official United Nations languages other than French and English (one hour and a half, morning of 21 August 2002);

(c) Summary in English of a speech in French (one hour and a half, afternoon of 21 August 2002);

(d) Translation into English of one specialized text (economic, legal or scientific/technical) from Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish (one hour and a half, afternoon of 21 August 2002).

10. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will **not** be permitted during the examination. Similarly, candidates may not use personal computers to prepare their papers.

11. On the basis of the results of each written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview. The Board will interview each candidate to assess general knowledge, professional experience and knowledge of the United Nations and current events. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview **should not** assume that they will automatically be offered an assignment.

12. On the basis of the overall results of each examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the relevant roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores or results. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be recruited from the rosters in overall ranking order, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations. Candidates appointed to a function who have been successful in more than one examination will be eligible to transfer at a later date to a different function for which they have also passed the examination.

13. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels. Successful candidates are expected to be able to use a computer workstation.

14. Successful candidates assigned directly to duty stations away from Headquarters will normally be required to spend the first six months of their trial period in the corresponding service at Headquarters.

15. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their functions at the P-3 level. Staff members on fixed-term appointment will be eligible to be considered for permanent appointment subject to the requirements of the staff rules in force. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

16. In accordance with the needs of the service/section, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

17. Staff members applying for the examination should complete the attached form and submit it, not later than **24 June 2002**, to:

2002 Competitive Examinations for English-language Verbatim Reporters, Editors and Translators/Précis-Writers
Examinations and Tests Section
Specialist Services Division
Office for Human Resources Management
Room S-2575-E
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax No.: (1-212) 963-3683

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered.

18. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications to the Specialist Services Division of the Office of Human Resources Management through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by **24 June 2002**, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division.

Application[a]

2002 competitive examinations for English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers

Index No.[b] ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract _____ Expiration date _____

Department/office[c] _____ Duty station _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax extension _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language?[d] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

A. Knowledge of other languages[e]

Language(s)	*United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)*	*Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)*

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	*Read*		*Understand*		*Speak*		*Write*	
	Easily	*Not easily*	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Fluently*	*Not fluently*	*Easily*	*Not easily*

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications

Name of institution[f] *(include place and country)*	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Degree or equivalent*[f]	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution[f] *(include place and country)*	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Certificate or equivalent*[f]	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in verbatim reporting, editing, translation/précis-writing or related fields, if any.

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F. Please indicate the examination(s) for which you are applying. Your application will not be considered if this part of the application is not completed.

☐ (a) The competitive examination for English-language verbatim reporters;

☐ (b) The competitive examination for English-language editors;

☐ (c) The competitive examination for English-language translators/ précis-writers

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ Signature _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/2002/30 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2002 competitive examinations for English-language verbatim reporters, editors and translators/précis-writers, and recommended for inclusion in the roster(s), my assignment as an English-language verbatim reporter, editor or translator/précis-writer will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 12 to 16 of that circular.

Date _____ Signature _____

Notes

[a] Staff members applying for these examinations **must complete this application form**. In addition, staff members **must attach** written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications from establishments at which English is the principal language of instruction. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless the staff member was convoked for the G-to-P examination for promotion to the Professional category or for another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member for completion and resubmission **by the deadline for receipt of applications** in the Specialist Services Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division will **not** be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications on time.

[b] Normally appears on your grounds pass, monthly salary statement and personnel action (P.5) forms. If not, please contact your Human Resources Officer to obtain your number.

[c] Staff members should indicate the department or office to which they are currently assigned, e.g., DGAACS, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (please specify).

[d] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to English as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[e] Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 (b) above.

[f] Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.